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EXAMINER

TRAN, DOUGLAS Q

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2624

DATE MAILED: 01/20/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/612,435

Applicant(s)

MIYAHARA, NOBUAKI

Examiner

Douglas Q. Tran

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 7,8,11-18,21 and 22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 9,10,19 and 20 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 7/7/00 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 9 is objected to because of the following informalities: the word "has" from line 25 of page 45 should be "have" because this verb is applied to both of "said first image formation apparatus and said second image formation apparatus" on lines 24 and 25 of page 45. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 7-8, 13-18, and 21-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Second embodiment and Third embodiment of Owa et al. (US Patent No. 6,348,971 B2).

As to claim 7, Owa, from Second Embodiment, teaches an image formation system (fig. 7) which has an information processing apparatus (21 in fig. 7) capable of selectively

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transmitting a series of image data composed of plural pages containing first kind image data and second kind image data different from the first kind image data (30 in fig. 7 indicates that a document including the color image data and the monochrome image data) to a first image formation apparatus and a second image formation apparatus in the page unit (30a in fig. 7 indicates the color printer 31a for printing the color print page group 30a; and the monochrome printer 31c for receiving and printing the monochrome print page group 30b), the system comprising:

control means (i.e., the print data generation system 21 in fig. 7) a box of the transmit print data S49 in fig. 11) for controlling to transmit (It is noted that the print data generation system 21 in fig. 7 has a function for controlling to transmit the print data to the selected printer which is indicated at a box of the transmit print data S49 in fig. 11) the first kind image data to the first image formation apparatus and transmit the second kind image data to the second image formation apparatus from the series of image data (col. 8, lines 49-56 describes that a document data is sorted into a first print page group 30a consisting of color print pages and a second print page group 30b consisting of monochrome print pages, and then the print page group 30a and 30b are transmitted to the color printer and monochrome printer, respectively "col. 8, lines 65-67").

However, Owa, from this embodiment, does not teach the transmission timing is controlled by the control means for the first kind image data to the first image formation apparatus differ from the transmission timing of the second kind image data to the second formation apparatus in accordance with a function of the first or second image formation apparatus.

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Owa, from Third embodiment, teaches transmission timing is set for the first kind image data to the first image formation apparatus differ from the transmission timing of the second kind image data to the second formation apparatus in accordance with a function of the first or second image formation apparatus (col. ¹⁶6, lines 40-46 describes that if the print data contains color print data, which would be considered as the first kind image data, is determined, then the color print data is transmitted to the color printer preceding any other data. Therefore, the different kinds of image data for transmitting to the different kinds of the printers are arranged in the different timing).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the printing system of Owa for controlling the transmission timing of the first kind image data to the first image formation apparatus differ from the transmission timing of the second kind image data to the second formation apparatus in accordance with a function of the first or second image formation apparatus as taught by Owa from the third embodiment. The suggestion for modifying the printing system of the second embodiment of Owa can be reasoned by one of ordinary skill in the art as set forth above by the third embodiment of Owa because the modified systems would increase the functionalities of the control system "21 in fig. 7" for controlling to arrange the different transmission timing for the different kinds of image data to the different kinds of the printers. Such modification of the printing system would allow the printers to output the printed pages at the same time and a user can pick up the whole document in the different printers at the same time.

As to claim 8, Owa discloses every feature discussed in claim 7, and Owa further teaches the function includes a first function to perform spooling processing (col. 16, lines 55-57

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describes that the function of the color printer to perform spooling processing by converting the color page into color print data preceding other pages).

As to claim 13, Owa discloses every feature discussed in claim 7, and Owa further teaches the first kind image data represents a BW image and the second kind image data represents a color image (col. 8, lines 52-56 indicates that the document contains color and monochrome print pages, it is sorted into a print page group 30b consisting of monochrome “or BW” print pages and a print page group 30a consisting of color print pages).

As to claim 14, Owa discloses every feature discussed in claim 8, and Owa further teaches the first kind image data represents a photograph image and the second kind image data represents a character image (col. 8, lines 52-56 indicates that the document contains color and monochrome print pages, it is sorted into a print page group 30b consisting of monochrome “or BW” print pages and a print page group 30a consisting of color print pages. It is noted that a photograph image would be considered as one of color image data group because the photograph image consisting of color data and high resolution, and a character image would be considered as one of monochrome image data group because the character image consisting of black and white text data).

As to claim 15, Owa, from Second Embodiment, teaches a control method of an image formation system (fig. 7) which has an information processing apparatus (21 in fig. 7) capable of selectively transmitting a series of image data composed of plural pages containing first kind image data and second kind image data different from the first kind image data (30 in fig. 7 indicates that a document including the color image data and the monochrome image data) to a first image formation apparatus and a second image formation apparatus in the page unit (30a in

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fig. 7 indicates the color printer 31a for printing the color print page group 30a; and the monochrome printer 31c for receiving and printing the monochrome print page group 30b), the system comprising:

a control step of controlling to transmit (i.e., a function for controlling to transmit the print data to the selected printer which is indicated at a box of the transmit print data S49 in fig. 11) the first kind image data to the first image formation apparatus and transmit the second kind image data to the second image formation apparatus from the series of image data (col. 8, lines 49-56 describes that a document data is sorted into a first print page group 30a consisting of color print pages and a second print page group 30b consisting of monochrome print pages, and then the print page group 30a and 30b are transmitted to the color printer and monochrome printer, respectively "col. 8, lines 65-67").

However, Owa, from this embodiment, does not teach the transmission timing of the first kind image data to the first image formation apparatus differ from the transmission timing of the second kind image data to the second formation apparatus in accordance with a function of the first or second image formation apparatus.

Owa, from Third embodiment, teaches transmission timing is set for the first kind image data to the first image formation apparatus differ from the transmission timing of the second kind image data to the second formation apparatus in accordance with a function of the first or second image formation apparatus (col. 6, lines 40-46 describes that if the print data contains color print data, which would be considered as the first kind image data, is determined, then the color print data is transmitted to the color printer preceding any other data. Therefore, the different kinds of

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image data for transmitting to the different kinds of the printers are arranged in the different timing).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the transmitting step of Owa to be controlled so that the transmission timing of the first kind image data to the first image formation apparatus differ from the transmission timing of the second kind image data to the second formation apparatus in accordance with a function of the first or second image formation apparatus as taught by Owa from the third embodiment. The suggestion for modifying the printing system of the second embodiment of Owa can be reasoned by one of ordinary skill in the art as set forth above by the third embodiment of Owa because the modified systems would increase the functionalities of the control system "21 in fig. 7" including additional control step for controlling to arrange the different transmission timing for the different kinds of image data to the different kinds of the printers. Such modification of the printing system would allow the printers to output the printed pages at the same time and a user can pick up the whole document in the different printers at the same time.

As to claim 16, Owa, from Second Embodiment, a storage medium which stores a computer-readable program to cause an image formation system to execute the following steps (col. 17, lines 59-63), an image formation system (fig. 7) having an information processing apparatus (21 in fig. 7) capable of selectively transmitting a series of image data composed of plural pages containing first kind image data and second kind image data different from the first kind image data (30 in fig. 7 indicates that a document including the color image data and the monochrome image data) to a first image formation apparatus and a second image formation

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apparatus in the page unit (30a in fig. 7 indicates the color printer 31a for printing the color print page group 30a; and the monochrome printer 31c for receiving and printing the monochrome print page group 30b), the system comprising:

a control step of controlling to transmit (i.e., a function for controlling to transmit the print data to the selected printer which is indicated at a box of the transmit print data S49 in fig. 11) the first kind image data to the first image formation apparatus and transmit the second kind image data to the second image formation apparatus from the series of image data (col. 8, lines 49-56 describes that a document data is sorted into a first print page group 30a consisting of color print pages and a second print page group 30b consisting of monochrome print pages, and then the print page group 30a and 30b are transmitted to the color printer and monochrome printer, respectively "col. 8, lines 65-67").

However, Owa, from this embodiment, does not teach the transmission timing of the first kind image data to the first image formation apparatus differ from the transmission timing of the second kind image data to the second formation apparatus in accordance with a function of the first or second image formation apparatus.

Owa, from Third embodiment, teaches transmission timing is set for the first kind image data to the first image formation apparatus differ from the transmission timing of the second kind image data to the second formation apparatus in accordance with a function of the first or second image formation apparatus (col. 6, lines 40-46 describes that if the print data contains color print data, which would be considered as the first kind image data, is determined, then the color print data is transmitted to the color printer preceding any other data. Therefore, the different kinds of

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image data for transmitting to the different kinds of the printers are arranged in the different timing).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the transmitting step of Owa to be controlled so that the transmission timing of the first kind image data to the first image formation apparatus differ from the transmission timing of the second kind image data to the second formation apparatus in accordance with a function of the first or second image formation apparatus as taught by Owa from the third embodiment. The suggestion for modifying the printing system of the second embodiment of Owa can be reasoned by one of ordinary skill in the art as set forth above by the third embodiment of Owa because the modified systems would increase the functionalities of the control system "21 in fig. 7" including additional control step for controlling to arrange the different transmission timing for the different kinds of image data to the different kinds of the printers. Such modification of the printing system would allow the printers to output the printed pages at the same time and a user can pick up the whole document in the different printers at the same time.

As to claim 17, Owa, from Second Embodiment, teaches an image formation system (fig. 7) which has an information processing apparatus (21 in fig. 7) capable of selectively transmitting image data (30 in fig. 7 indicates that a document including the color image data and the monochrome image data) to plural image formation apparatuses (30a in fig. 7 indicates the color printer 31a for printing the color print page group 30a; and the monochrome printer 31c for receiving and printing the monochrome print page group 30b), comprising:

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control means (i.e., the print data generation system 21 in fig. 7) for controlling to transmit (It is noted that the print data generation system 21 in fig. 7 has a function for controlling to transmit the print data to the selected printer which is indicated at a box of the transmit print data S49 in fig. 11) a part of pages to the first image formation apparatus and transmit remaining pages to the image formation apparatuses other than the first image formation apparatus from the series of image data composed of plural pages (col. 8, lines 49-56 describes that a document data is sorted into a first print page group 30a consisting of color print pages and a remaining print page group 30b consisting of monochrome print pages, and then the print page group 30a and 30b are transmitted to the color printer and monochrome printer, respectively “col. 8, lines 65-67”; and since fig. 9a indicates that the printer state management table from the printing system including plural different types of printers “col. 10, lines 23-34”, the remaining pages would be transmitted to other printers “31a-31c in fig. 7” based on the characteristics from the remaining pages and based on the printer selection means “25 in fig. 7” “col. 8, lines 24-29”).

However, Owa, from this embodiment, does not teach the transmission timing is controlled by the control means for the image data to the first image formation apparatus differ from the transmission timing of the image data to the other formation apparatuses in accordance with a function of the first or other image formation apparatuses.

Owa, from Third embodiment, teaches transmission timing is set for the image data to the first image formation apparatus differ from the transmission timing of the image data to the other formation apparatuses in accordance with a function of the first or other image formation apparatus (col. 6, lines 40-46 describes that if the print data contains color print data or image data high in print resolution “col. 16, lines 52-53”, which would be considered as the first kind

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image data, is determined, then the color print data is transmitted to the color printer preceding any other data. Therefore, the different kinds of image data for transmitting to the different kinds of the printers are arranged in the different timing).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the printing system of Owa for controlling the transmission timing of the part of pages to the first image formation apparatus differ from the transmission timing of the remaining pages to the other formation apparatuses in accordance with a function of the first or other image formation apparatuses as taught by Owa from the third embodiment. The suggestion for modifying the printing system of the second embodiment of Owa can be reasoned by one of ordinary skill in the art as set forth above by the third embodiment of Owa because the modified systems would increase the functionalities of the control system "21 in fig. 7" for controlling to arrange the different transmission timing for the different kinds of image data to the different kinds of the printers. Such modification of the printing system would allow the printers to output the printed pages at the same time and a user can pick up the whole document in the different printers at the same time.

As to claim 18, Owa discloses every feature discussed in claim 17, and Owa further teaches the function includes a first function to perform spooling processing (col. 16, lines 55-57 describes that the function of the color printer to perform spooling processing by converting the color page into color print data preceding other pages).

As to claim 21, Owa, from Second Embodiment, teaches a control method of an image formation system (fig. 7) which has an information processing apparatus (21 in fig. 7) capable of selectively transmitting image data (30 in fig. 7 indicates that a document including the color

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image data and the monochrome image data) to plural image formation apparatuses (30a in fig. 7 indicates the color printer 31a for printing the color print page group 30a; and the monochrome printer 31c for receiving and printing the monochrome print page group 30b), comprising:

a control step of controlling to transmit for controlling to transmit (It is noted that the print data generation system 21 in fig. 7 has a function for controlling to transmit the print data to the selected printer which is indicated at a box of the transmit print data S49 in fig. 11) a part of pages to the first image formation apparatus and transmit remaining pages to the image formation apparatuses other than the first image formation apparatus from the series of image data composed of plural pages (col. 8, lines 49-56 describes that a document data is sorted into a first print page group 30a consisting of color print pages and a remaining print page group 30b consisting of monochrome print pages, and then the print page group 30a and 30b are transmitted to the color printer and monochrome printer, respectively “col. 8, lines 65-67”; and since fig. 9a indicates that the printer state management table from the printing system including plural different types of printers “col. 10, lines 23-34”, the remaining pages would be transmitted to other printers “31a-31c in fig. 7” based on the characteristics from the remaining pages and based on the printer selection means “25 in fig. 7” “col. 8, lines 24-29”).

However, Owa, from this embodiment, does not teach the transmission timing of the image data to the first image formation apparatus differ from the transmission timing of the image data to the other formation apparatuses in accordance with a function of the first or other image formation apparatuses.

Owa, from Third embodiment, teaches transmission timing is set for the image data to the first image formation apparatus differ from the transmission timing of the image data to the other

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formation apparatuses in accordance with a function of the first or other image formation apparatus (col. 6, lines 40-46 describes that if the print data contains color print data or image data high in print resolution "col. 16, lines 52-53", which would be considered as the first kind image data, is determined, then the color print data is transmitted to the color printer preceding any other data. Therefore, the different kinds of image data for transmitting to the different kinds of the printers are arranged in the different timing).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the transmitting step of Owa to be controlled so that the transmission timing of the part of pages to the first image formation apparatus differ from the transmission timing of the remaining pages to the other formation apparatuses in accordance with a function of the first or other image formation apparatuses as taught by Owa from the third embodiment. The suggestion for modifying the printing system of the second embodiment of Owa can be reasoned by one of ordinary skill in the art as set forth above by the third embodiment of Owa because the modified systems would increase the functionalities of the control system "21 in fig. 7" for controlling to arrange the different transmission timing for the different kinds of image data to the different kinds of the printers. Such modification of the printing system would allow the printers to output the printed pages at the same time and a user can pick up the whole document in the different printers at the same time.

As to claim 22, Owa, from Second Embodiment, teaches a storage medium which stores a computer-readable program to cause an image formation system to execute the following steps (col. 17, lines 59-63), an image formation system (fig. 7) having an information processing apparatus (21 in fig. 7) capable of selectively transmitting image data (30 in fig. 7 indicates that a

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document including the color image data and the monochrome image data) to plural image formation apparatuses (30a in fig. 7 indicates the color printer 31a for printing the color print page group 30a; and the monochrome printer 31c for receiving and printing the monochrome print page group 30b), comprising:

a control step of controlling to transmit for controlling to transmit (It is noted that the print data generation system 21 in fig. 7 has a function for controlling to transmit the print data to the selected printer which is indicated at a box of the transmit print data S49 in fig. 11) a part of pages to the first image formation apparatus and transmit remaining pages to the image formation apparatuses other than the first image formation apparatus from the series of image data composed of plural pages (col. 8, lines 49-56 describes that a document data is sorted into a first print page group 30a consisting of color print pages and a remaining print page group 30b consisting of monochrome print pages, and then the print page group 30a and 30b are transmitted to the color printer and monochrome printer, respectively “col. 8, lines 65-67”; and since fig. 9a indicates that the printer state management table from the printing system including plural different types of printers “col. 10, lines 23-34”, the remaining pages would be transmitted to other printers “31a-31c in fig. 7” based on the characteristics from the remaining pages and based on the printer selection means “25 in fig. 7” “col. 8, lines 24-29”).

However, Owa, from this embodiment, does not teach the transmission timing of the image data to the first image formation apparatus differ from the transmission timing of the image data to the other formation apparatuses in accordance with a function of the first or other image formation apparatuses.

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Owa, from Third embodiment, teaches transmission timing is set for the image data to the first image formation apparatus differ from the transmission timing of the image data to the other formation apparatuses in accordance with a function of the first or other image formation apparatus (col. 6, lines 40-46 describes that if the print data contains color print data or image data high in print resolution "col. 16, lines 52-53", which would be considered as the first kind image data, is determined, then the color print data is transmitted to the color printer preceding any other data. Therefore, the different kinds of image data for transmitting to the different kinds of the printers are arranged in the different timing).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the transmitting step of Owa to be controlled so that the transmission timing of the part of pages to the first image formation apparatus differ from the transmission timing of the remaining pages to the other formation apparatuses in accordance with a function of the first or other image formation apparatuses as taught by Owa from the third embodiment. The suggestion for modifying the printing system of the second embodiment of Owa can be reasoned by one of ordinary skill in the art as set forth above by the third embodiment of Owa because the modified systems would increase the functionalities of the control system "21 in fig. 7" for controlling to arrange the different transmission timing for the different kinds of image data to the different kinds of the printers. Such modification of the printing system would allow the printers to output the printed pages at the same time and a user can pick up the whole document in the different printers at the same time.

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5. Claims 11-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Second embodiment and Third embodiment of Owa et al. (US Patent No. 6,348,971 B2) as applied to claim 7, and in view of First embodiment of Owa.

As to claim 11, Owa, with respect to the second and third embodiments, discloses every feature discussed in claim 7, in which Owa teaches the information processing apparatus and the image processing apparatus, which are the same apparatus (i.e., the print data generation system 21 in fig. 7) connects to a plurality of printers (31s in fig. 7); and the status of selected printers is reported to the user on the display means (col. 12, lines 58-63).

However, Owa, from the second and third embodiments, does not teach the information processing apparatus can input image data from a remote image processing apparatus, the control means includes display control means for selectively displaying message information to operator on the image processing apparatus, the first image formation apparatus and the second image apparatus, and the control means determines that the information has to be displayed on which of the image processing apparatus, the first image formation apparatus and the second apparatus in accordance with the function of the first and the second apparatus.

Owa, with respect to the first embodiment, teaches the information processing apparatus (i.e., a server 3 in fig. 1) can input image data from a remote image processing apparatus (i.e., a host computer 1 in fig. 1), the control means includes display control means for selectively displaying message information to operator on the image processing apparatus, the first image formation apparatus and the second image apparatus, and the control means determines that the information has to be displayed on which of the image processing apparatus, the first image formation apparatus and the second apparatus in accordance with the function of the first and the

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second apparatus (col. 17, lines 35-52 describes that the server 3 “in fig. 1” would input the request from each host computer 1 “col. 17, lines 47-48 ”and informs the host computer 1 of the selected optimum printer for each pages group which is displayed on the screen “in fig. 12b”).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the printing system from the second and third embodiments of Owa in order to include a server for connecting to the printers and reporting the status of the selected printers to the host computer as taught by the first embodiment of Owa. The suggestion for modifying the printing system of the second and third embodiments of Owa can be reasoned by one of ordinary skill in the art as set forth above by the first embodiment of Owa because the modified system would increase more flexible and efficiencies to the printing system if the large number of printers and a plurality of host computers are connected to the printing system via a server so that the server would control to communicate with both of the input devices and the output devices. Such modification would allow the server easily selects the large number of printers and just reports the status of the selected printers to each requested host computer.

As to claim 12, Owa discloses every feature discussed in claim 11, and Owa further teaches the controls means varies contents of the information in accordance with the function of the first image formation apparatus or the function of the second apparatus (the printer state management table 24 from 21 in fig. 7 and fig. 9a indicates the different information of the different types of printers is managed in the print data generation system 21 in fig. 7. Therefore, the printer is selected for printing each print page based on the printer state of each printer “col. 8, lines 24-27”).

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claims 1-6 are allowed.

Claims 1 and 6 are independent claims.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

As to claims 1 and 6, Owa teaches either the host computer or the server for controlling to separately output the color pages and/or monochrome pages or other characteristics from the page document to one or more the printers. However, Owa does not teach the print server for outputting image data mixedly including BW and color data, comprising “determination means for determining one of the BW image formation apparatus and the color image formation apparatus , which has an inserter having a sheet path not passing through a fixing unit, as a base; and instruction means for inserting the one of the BW page and the color page, set through the inserter and previously output, and simultaneously instructing to output the other of the BW page and the color page”. Therefore, the above underlined limitations of this claim would be allowable.

7. Claims 9-10 and 19-20 are objected.

Claims 9-10 and 19-20 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claims 7 and 17 respectively, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

As to claim 9, Owa, from the teaching of the third embodiment, teaches the transmission timing for the print data to the printer which is controlled based on the type of image data such as the color data or monochrome data or the print resolution from image data “col. 16, lines 43-47

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and 53-55". However, Owa does not teach "control means makes the different transmitting timing of the both kind image data to both of forming apparatuses in accordance with the fact that which of the first image formation apparatus and the second image formation apparatus have a second function to perform processing for feeding a previously image formed sheet, to which image formation processing has not to be performed". Therefore, the above underlined limitations of this claim would be allowable.

As to claim 19, Owa, from the teaching of the third embodiment, teaches the transmission timing for the print data to the printer which is controlled based on the type of image data such as the color data or monochrome data or the print resolution from image data "col. 16, lines 43-47 and 53-55". However, Owa does not teach "control means makes the different transmitting timing of the image data to the first image formation apparatus and the other forming apparatuses in accordance with the fact that which of the first image formation apparatus and the other image formation apparatuses have a second function to perform processing for feeding a previously image formed sheet, to which image formation processing has not to be performed". Therefore, the above underlined limitations of this claim would be allowable.

Contact Information

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-4700.

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